



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 13, 2003

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
MARVIN SMILON, HERBERT HADAD,
MICHAEL KULSTAD
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600

**U.S. CHARGES 10 WITH OPERATING DRUG RING
IN JEFFERSON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

JAMES B. COMEY, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, ANTHONY PLACIDO, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration's New York Field Division, WILLIAM G. McMAHON, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, New York Division, and RAYMOND W. KELLY, Commissioner of the New York City Police Department, announced the unsealing in federal court today of an indictment of LAWRENCE WILLIAMS and nine others in connection with a crack cocaine operation that operated in the Jefferson ("Jefferson") Housing Development in Manhattan.

According to the Indictment, WILLIAMS was charged with leading a gang of crack cocaine dealers between First and Third Avenues and between 112th and 115th Streets.

The Indictment charges LAWRENCE WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Rock," a/k/a "City," LAWRENCE RHODES, a/k/a "Al," a/k/a "Link," a/k/a "L," ROLAND LEONARDO, a/k/a "Morano," TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a

"Meeka," LATOYA SUMMERS, a/k/a "Toya," DAREN ROWE, KNEALAND ANTONIO STRAIN, a/k/a "Monsta," CAMILLE RHODES, and BASHEEM SMALLS with operating and participating in a retail crack cocaine ring that was based in the Jefferson Development from at least June 2002 to November 2003 (the "Williams Organization").

The indictment also charges members of the Williams Organization with thirteen counts of distribution and possession with intent to distribute various amounts of crack cocaine beginning in April 2003 and continuing into September 2003.

According to the Indictment, WILLIAMS ran the Organization and was responsible for purchasing powdered cocaine, arranging for that cocaine to be manufactured into crack, and supervising the sale of the crack cocaine by others. The Indictment further alleges that LAWRENCE RHODES assisted WILLIAMS in running the Organization by providing street-level drug dealers with pre-packaged quantities of crack cocaine, collecting drug proceeds from these drug dealers and selling crack cocaine to customers.

According to the Indictment, the following other members of the Organization had the following roles:

ROLAND LEONARDO, a/k/a "Morano" manufactured or "cooked" quantities of powdered cocaine into crack;

TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka" and LATOYA SUMMERS, a/k/a "Toya" were managers of the Organization who were responsible, among other things, for supervising other drug dealers;

DARREN ROWE stored quantities of crack, as well as drug proceeds, in an apartment located in Jefferson;

KNEALAND ANTIONIO STRAIN, a/k/a "Monsta" was a Maryland based drug-dealer who obtained distribution quantities of crack and powdered cocaine from LAWRENCE WILLIAMS; and

CAMILLE RHODES and BASHEEM SMALLS were street-level drug dealers for the Organization.

Each of these 10 people is charged in Count One of the Indictment with conspiring to distribute at least 50 grams of crack. If convicted of the conspiracy count, each of them faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years behind bars.

The thirteen counts of distribution and possession with intent to distribute crack are set forth below:

COUNT	DEFENDANTS	DATE	APPROXIMATE QUANTITY
TWO	LAWRENCE RHODES, a/k/a "Al," a/k/a "Link," a/k/a "L," and DARREN ROWE	06/07/02	42 grams
THREE	BASHEEM SMALLS	04/02/03	1.1 grams
FOUR	LATOYA SUMMERS, a/k/a "Toya"	04/09/03	2.1 grams
FIVE	LAWRENCE RHODES, a/k/a "Al," a/k/a "Link," a/k/a "L"	05/08/03	3.6 grams
SIX	TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka"	05/15/03	13.2 grams

SEVEN	TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka"	05/21/03	6.5 grams
EIGHT	LAWRENCE WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Rock" a/k/a "City," and LAWRENCE RHODES, a/k/a "Al," a/k/a "Link," a/k/a "L"	05/30/03	10.2 grams
NINE	TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka," and BASHEEM SMALLS	06/05/03	10.3 grams
TEN	LAWRENCE WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Rock," a/k/a "City," and TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka"	06/17/03	15.8 grams
ELEVEN	LAWRENCE WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Rock," a/k/a "City," and LAWRENCE RHODES, a/k/a "Al," a/k/a "Link," a/k/a "L"	06/25/03	11.6 grams
TWELVE	LAWRENCE WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Rock," a/k/a "City," and TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka"	06/26/03	15.6 grams
THIRTEEN	LAWRENCE WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Rock," a/k/a "City," TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka," and CAMILLE RHODES	08/30/03	16.1 grams
FOURTEEN	TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka"	09/09/03	24 grams

If convicted of the above counts, the defendants face maximum sentences ranging from 20 to 40 years in prison per count.

The Jefferson Development is a New York City public housing project that has a population of more than 3,500, with a median family income, according to the New York City Housing Authority, of approximately \$13,600. During the period of the

charged conspiracy, Jefferson was the site of five shootings, 47 robberies, 41 felony assaults, 2 burglaries, and 16 grand larceny offenses, according to New York City Police Department records. Jefferson is also a high drug trafficking area, and the NYPD and DEA believe that many of the non-drug crimes occurring at Jefferson are linked to the drug trade there.

COMEY said the investigation is continuing.

LAWRENCE WILLIAMS, a/k/a "Rock," a/k/a "City," 32, lives in the Bronx, New York.

LAWRENCE RHODES, a/k/a "Al," a/k/a "Link," a/k/a "L," 23, lives in Bronx, NY.

ROLAND LEONARDO, a/k/a "Morano," 28, lives in Bronx, NY.

TAMEEKA COLEMAN, a/k/a "Meeka," 22, lives in Manhattan.

LATOYA SUMMERS, a/k/a "Toya," 23, lives in Bronx, NY.

DAREN ROWE, 38, lives in Bronx, NY.

KNEALAND ANTONIO STRAIN, a/k/a "Monsta," 21, lives in Maryland.

CAMILLE RHODES, 21, lives in Bronx, NY.

BASHEEM SMALLS, 21, currently in custody on state charges, lived in the Manhattan.

MAURREEN WILLIAMS, 50, lives in Maryland.

Mr. COMEY praised the investigative efforts of the DEA, as well as of the New York City Police Department, the Bureau of

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and the New York State Police, which jointly conducted the investigation with the DEA.

Assistant United States Attorneys JONATHAN ABERNETHY and JASON SABOT are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

03-265

###